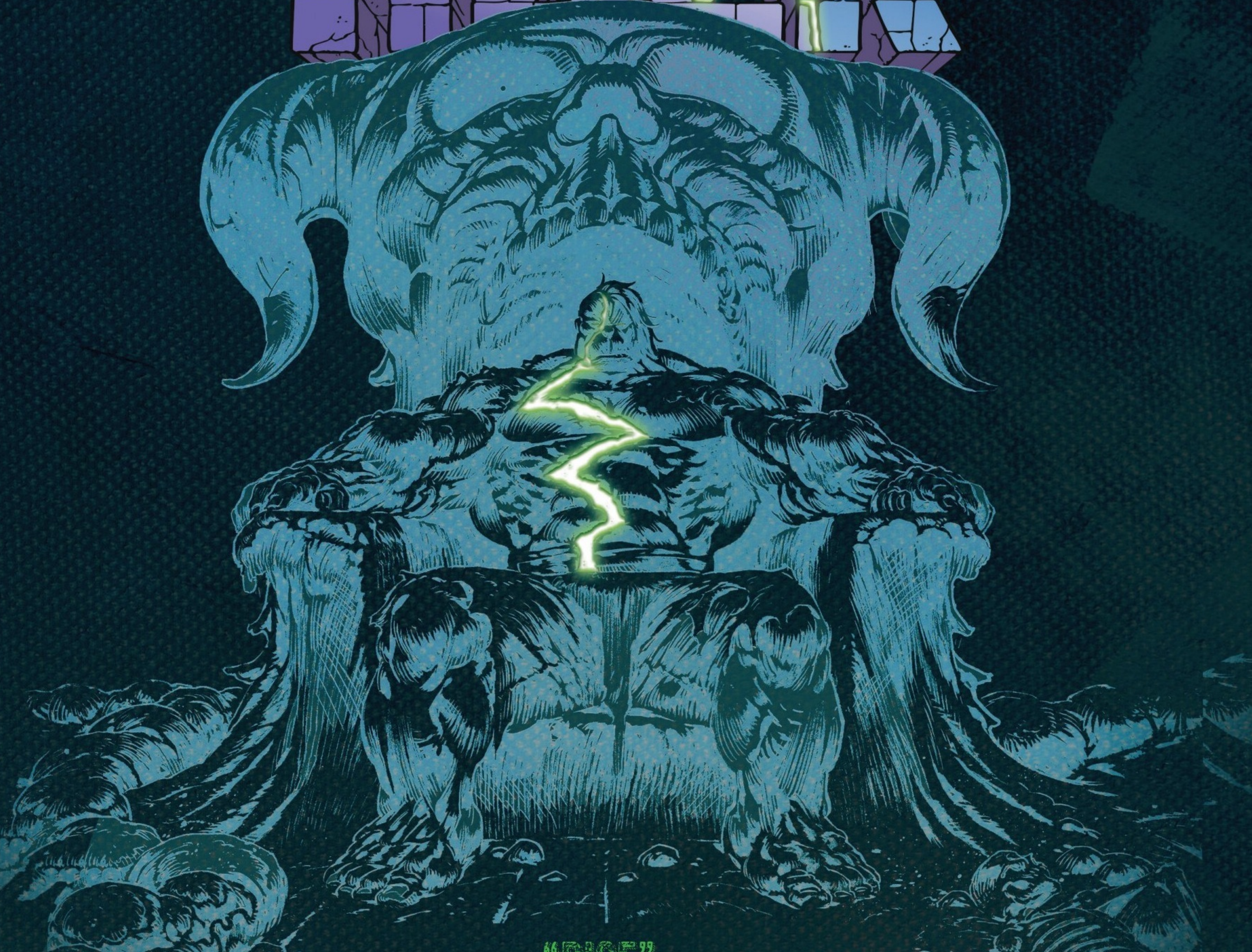
MARVEL
1
THE INFERNAL
HULK
JOHNSON
KLEIN
WILSON
PARENTAL ADVISORY

BRILLIANT PHYSICIST DR. BRUCE BANNER AND HIS GAMMA-FUELED ALTER EGO THE INCREDIBLE HULK HAVE BEEN GRUESOMELY RIPPED APART. HULK'S BODY IS NOW THE VESSEL OF ELDEST, IMBUED WITH THE CORRUPTIVE POWER OF THE GREAT OLD ONES. THE MARVEL UNIVERSE MUST NOW CONTEND WITH ONE OF THE MOST TERRIFYING THREATS IT HAS EVER FACED...

THE INFERNAL HULK



"RISE"

FOR AEONS UNTOLD, THE MOTHER OF HORRORS WAS IMPRISONED IN A POCKET DIMENSION, LOCKED BEHIND A GATE NONE BUT THE ONE BELOW ALL COULD OPEN. USING HULK AS THEIR VESSEL, THE BEING KNOWN AS ELDEST FINALLY OPENED HER MOTHER'S PRISON...BUT FOUND HER WITHERED, MINDLESS AND BROKEN. ELDEST CONSUMED THEIR MOTHER'S FLESH, IMBUING HULK'S BODY WITH THE PRIMORDIAL SEED OF CORRUPTION THAT ONCE CREATED THE GREAT OLD ONES. AS THE INFERNAL HULK RISES, A NEW AGE OF EARTH BEGINS: THE AGE OF MONSTERS.

WRITER...... PHILLIP KENNEDY JOHNSON
ARTIST.......... NIC KLEIN
COLOR ARTIST.......... MATTHEW WILSON
LETTERER.......... VC's CORY PETIT
COVER ARTIST.......... NIC KLEIN
VARIANT COVER ARTISTS..........
DAN PANOSIAN (FOIL);
NIC KLEIN (PROMO);
STEPHEN SEGOVIA & JESUS ABURTOV

DESIGNER CARLOS LAO ASSISTANT EDITORS AUSTIN HATCH & KAEDEN McGAHEY ASSOCIATE EDITOR MARTIN BIRO
EDITOR JORDAN D. WHITE EDITOR IN CHIEF C.B. CEBULSKI

HULK CREATED BY STAN LEE & JACK KIRBY

RED CREEK, KENTUCKY.
GOOD WORK TODAY, CHIG.
HELP ME GET THE PLASTIC UP BEFORE IT RAINS, THEN YOU CAN GET BACK HOME TO DIAPER DUTY.
ONE SEC... HUH.
HEY, BRIDGER. WHAT'S A "PEDIALYTE"?
HEH.
SHERRY SAYS FOR ME TO BRING HOME A--
BOOM

DID YOU HEAR SOMETH--?
PLOOM
RRRRRRRRRRRR
RRRRRRRRRRRRR
THE HELL *IS* THAT?
IT'S AN OLD *EVACUATION SIREN.*
I NEVER HEARD IT BEFORE.
THEY NEVER *USED IT* BEFORE.
SSKKKKRRRRRRRR
THREE HOURS AGO.

NOW.
THREE KLICKS!
IT AIN'T REALLY HIM.
HE'S COMING UP ON BRAVO TEAM!
I SAW HIM ON TV WITH THE AVENGERS ONCE. HE LOOKED KINDA SCARY, BUT...
...HE'S A GOOD GUY.
BOOM
STILL MOVING! TWO KLICKS AND CLOSING!
THIS IS THAT MYSTERY-O GUY OR SOMETHIN'. THE REAL GUY'S GONNA SHOW UP IN THE NICK O' TIME AND SAVE US.
YOU'LL SEE.
PING

LAST BUS JUST CLEARED THE LINE! TOWN'S EMPTY!
'CEPT FOR US.
WE'RE GIVING THE TOWN TIME TO GET CLEAR, KID. THAT'S THE JOB, AND WE'RE DOING IT. GOOD?
YESSIR, MISTER BRIDGER.
HOLY CRAP. YOU'RE DAVID BRIDGER? CAPTAIN DAVIS SAID YOU WERE A LEGIT WAR HERO IN YOUR DAY.
THAT'S NOT HOW I REMEMBER IT.
WELL, HE SAID YOU WERE A CRAZY GOOD SHOT, AT LEAST.
AND THAT YOU KILLED AN ASSLOAD OF PEOPLE.
B-BOOM
THAT'S THE OPPOSITE OF A HERO, KID.

THOUSAND METERS!
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
DORSEY, SIR.
I CAN SEE YOUR NAME TAPE. WHAT'S YOUR *NAME?*
OH. UM... *TRAVIS.*
TRAVIS, NOBODY IN COMBAT'S A HERO. EVERYONE'S JUST TRYING NOT TO GET KILLED.
THE GOOD ONES HELP THEIR *BUDDIES* NOT GET KILLED.
I KNOW IT'S SCARY AS HELL, TRAVIS. BUT I'M GONNA LOOK OUT FOR YOU. OKAY?
Y-YES, SIR.
INCOMING!
OH GOD. I--I CAN *SEE* HIM.
THE *REAL* ONE'S GONNA SAVE US. YOU'LL SEE.
IT'S GONNA BE O--

DOOM

D-DR. BRUCE BANNER!
BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, WE'RE--
POOM
...W-WE'RE AUTHORIZED TO...
POOM

THERE IS NO "BANNER" HERE.
N.

WH-WHAT...
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
FROM YOU?
FWUMP
NOTHING.

LIGHT HIM UP!

BRRRRAPT

BOOM

RUN, TRAVIS!
BRAKAKAKAK
I KNOW YOU.
I SEE JINNI DAGAAL, THE WAR DEVIL, BEHIND YOUR EYES.
BRAK
YOU, LITTLE MORTAL...
SPLAT
SHNK
...BELONG WITH US.
BRIDGER!
AND THIS ONE, AS WELL.
KA SQUISH

HNNNNH.
HNNNNH.
YES.
CHANGE NOW, MY DARLING.
HNNNNH...
BRIDGERRR...
BRIDGERRR...
...YOU...
...PROMISED.

HA!
VERY WELL.
JUST YOU, THEN.
I SUMMON THE LIVING CITY OF GOLOGOLTHIA.
ONCE I SUMMONED YOU TO THE BRIGHT TOWERS OF NINEVEH.
I NOW RAISE YOU FROM THE MOUNTAIN TOMB OF UDRU.
THE MOTHER OF HORRORS IS DEAD. HER ELDEST LIVES.
OBEY ME.

RISE.
THOOM
THOOM

HOURS LATER.
BLEURGH

BRIDGER.
COME DOWN.
YOU SAID YOU'D LOOK OUT FOR US, BRIDGER.
REMEMBER?
YOU PROMISED.

POOM
YOUR KINGDOM HAS ITS CAPITAL, CHILDREN...
...AND YOUR KING SUMMONS YOU.
RISE.
GREEONKK!

CONFLICTING REPORTS OUT OF KENTUCKY THIS MORNING AS AN ENTIRE MOUNTAIN COLLAPSES, BLANKETING THE REGION IN SMOKE.
LOCAL GROUPS FIRST BLAMED A COAL MINE FIRE THAT HAS BEEN BURNING FOR DECADES...
...BUT WE ARE NOW HEARING REPORTS OF A SUPERHUMAN RESEMBLING A FORMER AVENGER, THE HULK.
THE AVENGERS HAVE NOT YET CONFIRMED HULK'S INVOLVEMENT, OR IF IT IS IN FACT DR. BRUCE BANNER.
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE CATASTROPHE, SUPERHUMAN-RELATED INCIDENTS HAVE RISEN SHARPLY ACROSS THE GLOBE...
...AND THE OCCULT COMMUNITY IS CALLING FOR SOCIETY TO PREPARE FOR A MODERN "AGE OF MONSTERS."
"PREPARE"? WHAT'S ANYBODY SUPPOSED TO DO AGAINST SOMETHIN' LIKE THAT?
WHY ARE ALL THE BIGGEST, STRONGEST ONES ALWAYS THE WORST ONES?
WHY CAN'T WE EVER GET A MONSTER WHO'S ON OUR SIDE?
NEXT: ATLANTIS IN THE AGE OF MONSTERS

THE REMEMBRANCES OF ELDEST GOLOGOLTHIA, THE LIVING CITY

The new Age of Monsters has begun. And as before, Gologolthia is our Sanctuary.

When the One Above All created the Earth, He created also the DEMIURGE to seed it with life. As with all worlds, that life was conceived by the One Above All's design. But with the coming of the Mother of Horrors, life on Earth began to change, and many creatures took on forms the One Above All did not intend.

One of the few uncorrupted was the god-strumpet Gaea, and beloved by her was the VOLANTINE CHOIR: a race of winged, brightly colored creatures that nested in trees and spoke in song. The sunlit forests in which the Volantine dwelled grew so tall that they seemed to reach the stars, and many of the Volantine lived out their long lives without ever touching the soil.

Then came Vinruviel, the Mother of Horrors. She blessed the Volantine with her corruptive seed, and though they kept their gift of flight, they became diggers also, long of claw and fang. They devoured the great trees until the forests lay dead and barren, and from the roots they dug a vast colony of tunnels and burrows. From their own bones and viscera, they built remarkable structures, and the colony of the Volantine Choir became the first city on Earth.

Though the Volantine were clever creatures, they were small and slight also, and so the Mother of Horrors chose one of their number to protect them. This one she blessed with great size and strength and commanded him to protect his kin and the city they had built. This one, she named GOLOGOLTHIA, which meant "keeper of my children," and he perched above the city with his wings ever spread wide, for the Volantine now favored shadow.

As the monsters of Earth claimed dominion over it, the One Above All at last took notice. By His command, the Demiurge and Gaea mated to create the DEMOGORGE, and with its coming the first Great Culling began. One by one, the many wonders Mother had created were consumed by the Demogorge, until at last, it came for the Volantine Choir.

As the Demogorge descended upon the Volantine, he was met in the skies by Gologolthia. Though Gologolthia's strength was legend, he was no match for the terrible Demogorge, and he suffered many grievous wounds. For a night and a day, his blood fell to the city like rain, until at last the Demogorge struck Gologolthia dead, and like a stone, he fell from the sky.

With Gologolthia dead, the Demogorge turned to the city of the Volantine…but found it empty. Their protector's sacrifice had given them time to dig, to escape the wrath of the Demogorge. Enraged, the Demogorge broke apart the Earth searching for the Volantine Choir, but they had dug deeper than even the Demogorge could go. In his rage, he rent apart his enemy's corpse, drenching the deserted city in Gologolthia's blood until naught remained.

When the Demogorge had gone and night had fallen, the Volantine emerged from their tunnels and found their city destroyed. But the Mother of Horrors had commanded Gologolthia to protect his kind, and death did not free Gologolthia from her command. As Gologolthia's blood seeped into the soil and stone and fallen structures, new towers of flesh and sinew rose from the Earth to replace the old. By Gologolthia's sacrifice had the Volantine survived the Great Culling, and his flesh became their living sanctuary.

Many times, servants of the One Above All would return to lay waste to the Living City of the Volantine Choir. Each time the city rose anew, and it became home to not just the Volantine, but to all Mother Vinruviel's children. Aeons later, when I sacked Nineveh and made it my capital, the blood and spirit of Gologolthia imbued every stone, watching over us.

Whenever the monsters of Earth need sanctuary, the living city will rise. And when the human cattle grow desperate enough to come for us, they will find mighty Gologolthia waiting.

NEXT

BY PHILLIP KENNEDY JOHNSON, NIC KLEIN AND MATTHEW WILSON

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